

# NEW STATE PARKWAY

CONNECTING

THE BRONX RIVER PARKWAY

AT KENSICO DAM

WITH THE

BEAR MOUNTAIN BRIDGE



DEDICATION, NOVEMBER 14, 1931

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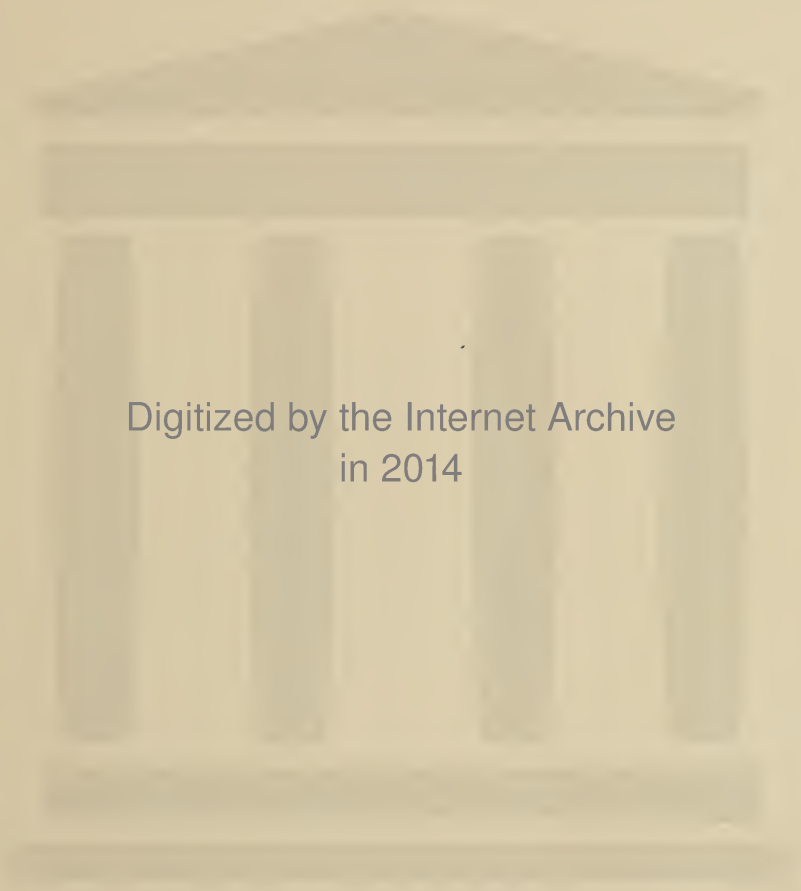
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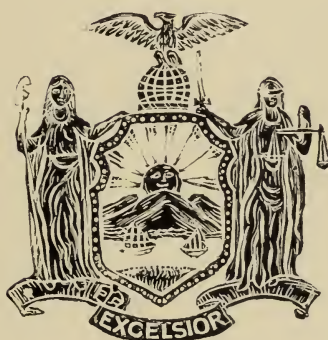
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STATE PARKWAY  
*Kensico Dam—Hawthorne Section*

# *PROGRAM*



## PRESIDING

HON. ARTHUR W. LAWRENCE

President

Westchester County Park Commission



## SPEAKERS

HON. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Governor of the State of New York

HON. ROBERT MOSES

Chairman, State Council of Parks

DR. JOHN H. FINLEY



STATE PARKWAY  
*Pines Bridge Road Crossing*

The State of New York, in officially opening this new State Parkway connecting the Bronx River Parkway at Kensico Dam with the Bear Mountain Bridge, has provided a modern express motor traffic route linking New York City with upstate arteries both east and west of the Hudson River. Including its connection to the Eastern State Parkway at the Putnam County line, the new parkway has a length of 30 miles. The distance from Bronx Park in New York City to the Bear Mountain Bridge by way of the Bronx River Parkway and the new State Parkway, is 45 miles.

Similar parkways have been developed and put into service by the State on Long Island. The Bronx River Parkway, the Hutchinson River and the Saw Mill River Parkways have become widely known as important features of the Westchester County Park System. The Mount Vernon Parkway now under construction by the United States Government from the Lincoln Memorial along the Potomac River to Mount Vernon, embodies the same principles of design as the Westchester County and Long Island parkways.

The dominating principle in the planning and design of all of these parkways is to combine the practical with the esthetic and to minimize interference with traffic flow. In



the attainment of this result, there are three elements of outstanding importance:

- First: A right-of-way of sufficient width to provide a "buffer" strip of land on both sides of the paved motor driveway, thereby excluding privately owned abutting property from direct contact with the travelled roadway.
- Second: The elimination of grade crossings at main intersecting highways which are carried over or under the parkway drive by bridges.
- Third: Access and exit roadways spaced at infrequent intervals to reduce friction between entering and departing vehicles and the main traffic streams.

The broad right-of-way affording land in excess of the paved roadway requirements eliminates roadside disfigurement by sign boards, unsightly filling stations, and the heterogeneous ugliness that has become increasingly offensive to the travelling public. The parkways provide and permanently assure an ever varying natural panorama of grass, trees, waterfalls, lakes, streams and distant landscapes as an alternative for the discordant pattern of commercial vulgarity that assaults the eye of the motorist along so many of our main highways.

Better control of the parking problem on parkways promotes safety and unimpeded traffic movement. The parkway drives do not afford direct access to private property and there is no motive for roadside stops. "No parking" regulations can easily be enforced and the full pavement width is available for moving traffic.

A major advantage is the enhancement of abutting property values instead of the depreciation of residential properties which so often results from increase of traffic on trunk line highways.

The advantages afforded by grade separation bridges

and by infrequent access roadways both from the standpoints of safety and traffic movement are obvious.

The parkway type of motor highway demonstrates the futility of building future main highways in metropolitan districts which ignore the adjustments and relationships to abutting lands necessitated by motor traffic.

Wide, modern concrete pavements involve heavy expenditures of public funds. New roads with a right-of-way of ordinary width entail uncontrolled marginal development and access. Within a few years such roads become over-burdened with a mixture of local and through traffic, parking problems and promiscuous entry and exit streets. Zoning, parking and other prohibitory ordinances break down. Public protests against congestion, and demands for new roads generally result in a repetition of the same process with the taxpayers paying increasing costs of congestion.

The adoption of the parkway principle of highway construction by the State of New York and in turn by the United States government marks the beginning of a new epoch in the age-old history of road building.

It is a reasonable forecast that the new State Parkway now opened from the Bronx River Parkway at the Kensico Dam to Bear Mountain Bridge is simply one link in the extensive future systems of parkways destined to be built not only in the State of New York but throughout the nation.

The Bronx River Parkway, extending from Bronx Park in New York City to Kensico Dam in Westchester County, was completed at the end of 1925. It afforded the first convincing demonstration of the parkway principle as an effective solution of motor traffic highway problems. In its earliest origins, this parkway was a sanitary improvement for the reclamation of the Bronx River valley. Incorporated with this primary purpose was the paved roadway in a reservation of sufficient width to include both the Bronx River and the roadway.



BRONX RIVER PARKWAY  
*West Pondfield Road, Bronxville*

In 1922 while still participating with the City of New York in the last stages of completing the Bronx River Parkway, Westchester County launched a county park and parkway program of its own under authority of an Act of the Legislature. Coincidentally with Westchester's county park program, an expansion of the park system of the State of New York was authorized by a referendum vote in 1923. Under this state program the Westchester County Park Commission was designated as agent for the State by Legislative Act, to build the new parkway connecting the Bronx River Parkway at the Kensico Dam with Bear Mountain Bridge, by way of Mohansic Park.

The state parks and parkways are under the jurisdiction of the State Conservation Department, with the State Council of Parks, composed of all members of various regional park commissions, acting as a coordinating agency.

The parkway route laid out by the Commission's engi-

neers and landscape architects traverses one of the most picturesque regions of Westchester County. After leaving the plaza at Kensico Dam, it follows an upper reach of the Bronx River valley lands through the Town of Mount Pleasant and passes over a low divide to the valley of the Saw Mill River at Hawthorne. Here the hills are cleft in four directions by the intersecting valleys which merge in a level plain. At this point the State Parkway intersects the route of the Saw Mill River Parkway now under construction by the Westchester County Park Commission. The junction between the two parkways is effected through the medium of a great traffic circle.

After leaving the circle at Hawthorne, the State Parkway merges for a short distance with the Saw Mill River Road and passes from the valley of the Saw Mill River to the upper Pocantico valley which it follows past Briareliff Manor to Echo Lake.



STATE PARKWAY  
*State Police Barracks near Hawthorne*





STATE PARKWAY  
*Echo Lake Park*





CROTON LAKE BRIDGE

From Echo Lake northward, the new parkway enters a region of rugged topography and the scenic grandeur typical of northern Westchester. The route ascends on a moderate grade to Kitchawan Woods, affording forest glimpses suggestive of the Adirondaeks.

There is a long range view to distant Westchester hills from the summit at Kitchawan Woods. The parkway then begins a descent to the valley of Croton Lake which is crossed on a steel arched bridge 750 feet in span, affording long views up and down the Croton valley over blue waters lost in a distant blending with hills and sky.

After leaving the bridge, the roadway skirts the lake and begins an ascent around the slopes of Turkey Mountain and French Hill to Mohansic Park, where Mohansic Lake is in view for more than a mile. An easy upgrade carries the roadway from Mohansic Lake to Crompond Road on the northerly boundary of Mohansic Park. At this point the parkway has a branch extending northward

to the Putnam County line near Shrub Oak where it will connect with the Eastern State Parkway. This northward branch will be completed in 1932.

From Mohansic Park the main route of the parkway passes into the Hunter Brook valley and will temporarily utilize a short section of the Crompond Road. Near Peekskill a high summit is attained at Jacobs Hill where there are overlooks providing views of Westchester and Putnam County hills toward the northeast and the superb scenery of the gateway to the Hudson River highlands at Anthony's nose and Bear Mountain toward the west. From this point the motorist soon passes over the Albany Post Road at Peekskill, crosses Peekskill Creek and enters the approach roadway to the Bear Mountain Bridge. The picturesque region threaded by the new parkway from Briarcliff Manor northward to Peekskill has been inaccessible heretofore to motorists.

At intervals along the route advantage has been taken of scenically attractive locations for the development of recreational areas. Public picnic ground accommodations equipped with outdoor tables and fireplaces are provided at Echo Lake, Kitchawan Woods, Mohansic Park, and at Hunters Brook. From Briarcliff Manor northward, an extensive bridle path system has been developed.

Through the delegation of authority by the State to the Westchester County Park Commission as its agent, the new parkway is closely coordinated with Westchester County's own extensive park and parkway program. This coordination applies not only to physical contacts and effective connections with the county system of parkways, but the established policy of eliminating grade crossings, the harmonious uniformity of roadside and landscape development, and finally the architectural design governing the type and character of structures.

The appropriations of State funds for the entire 30-mile project totalled \$10,013,000. The cost per mile is the lowest on record for parkway construction.

In addition to the heavy grading and the 40-foot driveway pavement, the work has involved the construction of twelve bridges for the elimination of highway grade crossings, and the 750-foot steel arch span over Croton Lake, the main reservoir of New York City's Croton water supply system. At its extreme northerly end the parkway is carried over Peekskill Creek on a long trestle and causeway.

By reason of the increasing burden of through traffic passing over state and county thoroughfares between New York City and the Bear Mountain Bridge, particularly the Albany Post Road, the construction of the new State Parkway was regarded by the Westchester County Park Commission as emergency work and was carried through on that basis.



STATE PARKWAY  
*Approaching Hudson River at Peekskill*

DONATIONS OF  
RIGHT-OF-WAY LANDS FOR THE  
  
New State Parkway

On behalf of the people of the State of New York, the members of the Westchester County Park Commission record their appreciation of the following donations of right-of-way lands which aided substantially in advancing the State Parkway connecting the Bronx River Parkway at Kensico Dam with the Bear Mountain Bridge.

William Delavan Baldwin .....	24.36 acres
Briarcliff Realty Company, Henry H. Law, President .....	31.3 acres
Arthur O. Choate .....	12.9 acres
Georgie McDonald Reed .....	2.07 acres
John D. Rockefeller, Jr. ....	8.3 acres
James A. Stillman .....	5.07 acres

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L. R. STUFFLER  
Superintendent of Construction  
(Commission Labor Forces)

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Landscape Architect

CLINTON F. LOYD  
Architectural Designer

A. R. JENNINGS  
Landscape Designer

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H. V. DICKINSON  
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Design of Croton Lake Bridge

RUNYON & CAREY  
Driveway Lighting

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*Echo Lake*



ECHO LAKE PARK





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